asked to be admitted to the work gang. They would show us how Siberians brandish the scythe!

Toward evening, horsemen appeared on the border of the meadow, converging on our party from all sides. We were surrounded by mounted guards and soldiers. The assistant of the superintendent dismounted and handed our guards an order: Take all prisoners back to the prison. The gendarmes had sent a telegram to St. Petersburg stating that preparations for a mass escape of political prisoners were being made under cover of haymaking. The Department of Justice ordered the Irkutsk authorities to take immediate measures to prevent the escape. Surrounded by a strong convoy, the party returned to Alexandrovsk.

I entered the prison building with the other prisoners, but the chief guard turned me back. "Each one," he explained, "returns to his ward. You, Mr. Woytinsky, go to your cabin."

Despite frequent changes in my official status in the work gang, my main occupation remained the same. I wrote about life in prisons for the *Russkoe Bogatstvo* (*Wealth of Russia*), the favorite organ of the progressive intelligentsia, and on political issues in short-lived, more radical periodicals. I signed my articles "S," but this pen name was no longer a secret. The superintendent was proud of having a writer in his work gang. Three magazines, among them an issue of the *Russkoe Bogatstvo*, were confiscated because of my essays, but no charge was raised against me. The only trouble I had with the administration at that time came from my activity as the "postmaster" of the Collective and from my literary contributions to the S-D newspaper in Irkutsk.

The guards searched my cabin nearly every week but the search was usually superficial. Whenever a thorough inspection was ordered from Irkutsk, the chief guard warned me, "Keep the barracks clean, guests are coming. . . ." Once, however, I was caught off guard. In the afternoon I had gotten a large bunch of clippings ready for the Collective, but the man who served as the mail pigeon did not appear. Waiting for him, I had my mail on the table when the searching party arrived. The superintendent reproached me bitterly. "I did not expect that you would abstain completely from corresponding with the prison," he said. "But how could you, a writer, an educated man, let my stupid guards catch you red-handed?" I was punished by being forbidden to leave the prison grounds for three months.

The case of the Irkutsk newspaper threatened to become more serious. The paper—a weekly of tabloid format—was founded by Professor Rozhkov, my companion of old times in the St. Petersburg Committee, and he persuaded me to contribute satirical sketches on current political events in a style then popular in Russia. The gen-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN